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ABSTRACT

The ethnic factor in public education is the main focus of this paper. Among those playing leading roles in the society, there is a general tendency to underestimate the importance of ethnicity as a factor in group life, and usefulness of knowledge about ethnic groupings in America as an aid in coping with social problems, and, perhaps more vital, as a resource available for strengthening and enriching our national existence, including the educational experience. Along with down grading of ethnicity, a series of other issues is addressed: the public school's failure to live up to its expectations to serve as a means of upward mobility for the lower socioeconomic classes, the necessity of ethnic studies, the salience of ethnicity, and ethnic succession. The relative neglect of the historical and contemporary fact of the very close correlation in American life of both class and ethnicity has led to a lack of preciseness and a lack of appreciation of the relative importance of differential ethnicity. It is suggested that perhaps the single most important goal a complicated, dynamic, and diverse society must learn in order to achieve and to educate its young to strive for, is the fostering of a new pluralism. (Author/AM)

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Ethnicity And American Education

Irving M. Levine

This paper is an edited compendium of the recent writings of Rudolph J. Vecoli, Seymour P. Lachman, David K. Cohen, Melvin Scult, Harold J. Abramson, Peter Binzen, Judith M. Herman and myself. It deals almost exclusively with the ethnic factor in public education and leaves the interesting and largely unmined area of ethnicity and non-public education for another day.

Among those playing leading roles in the drama of our evolving society, there is a general tendency to underestimate the importance of ethnicity as a factor in group life, the usefulness of knowledge about ethnic groupings in America as an aid in coping with social problems, and perhaps more vital, as a resource available for strengthening and enriching our national existence, including the educational experience.

The Downgrading of Ethnicity

This downgrading of ethnicity prompted the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence to describe Americans as the victims of "historical amnesia that masks much of their turbulent past.

"The myth of the melting pot has obscured the great degree to which Americans have historically identified with their national citizenship through their myriad subnational affiliations. This has meant inevitable conflict, competition, friction, and conflict."

Scholarly labors during the past quarter century demonstrate more concern for the processes of absorption and assimilation in our society rather than for the diversity of its components. Among the ethnically aware scholars, several offer hypotheses explaining the relative absence of an ethnic dimension from American history, sociology and intellectual life in general.

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Vecoli faults American historiography for not adequately emphasizing the role of ethnic group styles and interests as important contributors (if not determinants) of American institutions.[1] An assimilationist bias, he suggests, has led historians to look for, and find, evidence of homogeneity rather than

diversity. Concurring, the editors of a recent book aim at counterbalancing the "demands (for) conformity" which have been made of ethnic groups:

> Because of a predominantly English heritage in the colonial period, the United States, a country of many peoples, often has evaluated its varied citizenry by a single standard: white, Anglo-Saxon, middle-class Protestantism. Although popular rhetoric glorified the country as a melting pot of different peoples, in actuality this meant melting diversity into conformity with Anglo-Saxon characteristics.
>
> ..."Ethnicity" (Fishman says) is not a phenomenon with which most American intellectuals are really familiar..., it is not one in which they are really interested (for isn't ethnicity "something old fashioned and unenlightened") and it is not one toward which they are sympathetic (since they themselves are "liberated from that kind of thing").[2]

Vecoli's analysis of the sociology of the academic community leads him to conclude that students from ethnic backgrounds are consistently exposed to the assimilationist norms of that community. "As emancipated intellectuals," he says with tongue-in-Italian-cheek, "they reject the narrow parochialism and tribal loyalties of their youth.....How many graduate students have shied away from research topics for fear they would be suspected of ethnic chauvinism?"[3]

Yet the shoe of the chauvinist may well be on the wrong foot. Consider the definition of the word *ethnic* in a popular dictionary:

> Neither Jewish nor Christian; pagan.
> (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary)

How, then, do we define the concept?

The precise nature of ethnicity in America is extremely difficult to pinpoint. Indeed, it is even difficult to define. Rev. Andrew Greeley, who has done a popular work in this field, uses Weber's definition: "an ethnic group is a human collectivity based on an assumption of common origin, real or imaginary."[4] But whose assumption is meant -- the ethnic's, the larger society's, history's? As Fishman says:

> The question immediately arises as to *when* a group is a group, i.e., how much "groupness" (and by whose standards?) is required? Does an ethnic group become and remain a group when (and as long as) its own *members* consider it to be a separate group or when (and

> as long as) outsiders consider it to be such a group? Do individuals belong to an ethnic group when they themselves acknowledge such membership or when others attribute such membership to them?[5]

Some definitions are so broad as to include nearly everyone as some sort of "ethnic," such as Abramson's notion of ethnicity as "a kind of distinctiveness defined by race, religion, national origin, and even geographical isolation."[6] Gordon categorizes intellectuals as an ethnic group, since they share common values, have communications mechanisms internal to themselves, and often even marry within their own group.[7] Some theorists insist on consciousness as a prerequisite to ethnicity ("consciousness of kind"), and some assert that behavioral distinctions exist between groups even where no consciousness is present, as a result of generations of socialization patterns -- in which case one has no choice.

At times the important element may be group power and group interest, where the group whose common interest is being asserted is generally descended from a common origin, whether the interest is expressed in terms of that origin or not. At other times, we will focus on group identity (the conscious dimension). In still other instances, we will be talking about life styles, or cultural variables, or behavioral differences, as between groups whose parents are Italian and groups whose parents are Polish. Finally, we will sometimes relate to the ethnic factor as a causal one, but most often we will be chiefly interested in how understanding "ethnicity" can help solve educational problems.

In a nation founded by immigrants and nurtured to world leadership in no small measure through the contributions of massive influxes of immigrants, ethnicity has been and continues to be a pervasive even though an unconscious factor throughout all facets of our existence. And the omission of ethnicity has been pervasive, too, in our nation's educational programming as in so many other areas. As we are discovering, it is a costly omission.

A great deal more knowledge is needed to help us understand the precise nature of this factor. Did certain groups make it easier for a young person to succeed in schools, for example, because of cultural factors or the group's place in the cultural structure?

This kind of knowledge is important not only for an understanding of the past, but also for an indication of present educational policies. In which ethnic groups might which kinds of educational gains occur with what initial outside stimulation? What kinds of ethnic approaches can be utilized -- or developed -- to aid a group's overall educational advancement? Which past success models, whether in the school or outside or it, can work today?

One of the reasons it is difficult to pinpoint answers to questions such as these, and perhaps why the ethnic factor has been a "neglected" one, is that ethnic solidarity, interests, or even consciousness have often been expressed in non-ethnic terms or through other institutional forms. There are also few adequate guidelines for culling the ethnic factor out of a situation.

For example, Riesman and Jencks recount the history of the formation of church-related institutions of higher learning as having to do with conflicts between ethnic sub-groups within religious communities as well as differences between large religious groups.[8] They do not use David Danzig's term for it, but these authors are identifying the "religio-ethnic" nature of what is often perceived narrowly as a religious issue.[9]

Danzig described how strong the ethnic part of "religio-ethnic" could be in relating the results and interpretations of voting studies during the Roosevelt years. At one point between the 1936 and 1940 elections when Protestant support for Roosevelt sharply increased, it was thought by some to be the case that persons of Anglo-Saxon background (fairly far back!) were responding to FDR's lend-lease policy of help to England. (It was Roosevelt who, addressing a DAR convention after they had barred Marian Anderson from concertizing at Constitution Hall, greeted them with, "Fellow immigrants...")

There have been many other instances where a conflict or an expression of group interest has not been couched in ethnic group terms but has been ethnically related. The aim is not to impose an ethnic label on a situation in which ethnic identity or interest is not an issue, but to help understand the role (if any) played by these factors in situations where the participants are by any stretch of the imagination "ethnic."

Many of today's group conflict situations, in our opinion, contain a highly important ethnic dimension that often goes unrecognized. The "white community" is not a community at all, but is a variety of sub-communities, one line of division for which remains the line of national origin. Whether one's parents are Italian, Jewish, Irish, Polish, or whatever still does have a relationship to various perceptions and behaviors.

More knowledge about even the third generation -- the children of that "foreign stock" who are not identifiable through use of the census -- is crucial. The common assumption is that, except among Jews, most young people move to ethnically heterogenous suburbs and ethnic background loses its relevance, but some studies and increasingly sharp observations indicate that there are other ethnic enclaves even within suburban communities[10] and that ethnic interests and identity may be expressed in very different ways.

In the blue collar Kensington section of Philadelphia, for example, people's stated identification is with the neighborhood

("I'm a lifelong Kensingtonian") but the Irish Kensingtonians do not drink in the same bars as the Polish Kensingtonians. As will be shown further, there are ample grounds for accepting the judgment of Glazer and Moynihan: "The point about the melting pot is it did not happen."

Why have our history books failed to tell us this -- indeed, have broadcast an opposite version? Rudolph Vecoli pulls few punches: "Sad to say, historians *have* neglected the dimension of ethnicity in the American past. We have been made dramatically aware of our deficiency in this respect by the sudden and widespread demand for minority history courses. The most pressing demand, of course, is for Afro-American history. History departments which would have scoffed at the notion a few years ago are now recruiting *black* Afro-American historians. Unfortunately, much of the contemporary concern with minority group history is politically inspired, rather than deriving from an honest conviction of its inherent value as a field of study...

"Why has not the history of the United States been written in terms of the enormous diversity of race, culture, and religion which has characterized its people from the seventeenth century until today?

"By and large, the portrayal of this diversity has been an ideal to which we have paid lip service rather than a task to which we have addressed ourselves. That the history of a society whose distinctive attribute has been its racial, cultural, linguistic, and religious pluralism should have been written for the most part from an Anglo-American monistic perspective is indeed a paradox.

"I believe that there are two basic reasons why American historians have neglected the dimensions of ethnicity. One has to do with the prevailing ideology of the academic profession; the other, with its sociology. They are obviously interrelated.

"The belief in a 'new race of men' created in the crucible of democracy became essential to the conception of an American nationality. How else were Americans to emerge from the confusion of tongues, faiths, and races? But as Crevecoeur pointed out, the immigrant must be stripped of 'all his ancient prejudices and manners' in order to become a 'new man.' Rapid and total assimilation thus came to be regarded as natural, inevitable, and desirable."

It was not until 1939, however, that social scientific concepts were explicitly brought to bear on the historical study of ethnic groups. At the AHA meeting that year Caroline F. Ware presented a paper on *Cultural Groups in the United States*.[11] Ware noted the neglect by American historians of the ethnic groups which deviated from the dominant culture. Observing that the interaction of the immigrants with the modern city was creating a new industrial culture, Ware concluded:

> In the still unexplored history of the non-dominant culture groups of the industrial cities lies the story of an emerging industrial culture that represents the dynamic cultural frontier of modern America.[12]

Unfortunately, Ware's manifesto was hearkened to by too few. Three decades later the industrial culture of modern America remains largely unexplored history.

"The estrangement of many intellectuals from their ethnic roots may have something to do with their alienation from popular culture, while the widespread anti-intellectualism among ethnic Americans may reflect their resentment of the aloof professors whom they regard as traitors and Uncle Toms. Many ethnic groups sponsor historical societies which attempt to record in a more-or-less scholarly fashion the role and contribution of their particular element to American history. These efforts have not been generally viewed in a kindly fashion by professional historians But it has been the 'standoffish' attitude of historians of ethnic origin which has been most resented. Such academic snobbery, if such it is, is regrettable. For the cultivation of ethnic history might serve as one of the much-needed bridges between the university ghetto and the ethnic ghetto."[13]

The Public School's Failure

Turning from the ivied halls to the public schools, the melting pot again appears to be considerably less effective than it was cracked up to be. Dr. Seymour P. Lachman of the New York City Board of Education offered this review: "Ambitious and hyperbolic language was used to describe the mission of the public schools by a generation of educational reformers in the 1830s. Their dream has never become reality although many Americans have miscontrued reality by citing the dream and incorporating it onto the mythos of their historic being and the civic religion of their nation. The greatest of these educational leaders was Horace Mann, appointed in 1837 as the first secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education. In his 12th Annual Report he wrote that education, 'beyond all other devices of human origin is the great equalizer of the conditions of men, the balance wheel of the social machinery.' A new vision was thus born -- a vision of a public school that would, unlike the 19th century Prussian Volkschule, be common to all people, receiving children of all creeds, social classes and ethnic backgrounds -- a public school that would serve as a means of upward mobility for the lower socio-economic classes. It was a noble dream that was worthy of the spiritual descendents of Thomas Jefferson. Unfortunately, it turned out to be a pipe dream.

"It was Mann's dream which fired the imagination of many of

America's immigrants of the late 19th and early 20th centuries including numerous social idealists within the Jewish community. It was Mann's dream which today fires the imagination of many black, Puerto Rican, and Chicano leaders. But it has never been more than a frustrating and non-deliverable dream for many Americans. Let us again look at the record of the recent past and present.

"A study commissioned by New York's Board of Estimate in 1911 and undertaken by Prof. Paul Hanus of Harvard University revealed that while some New York City schools were doing very well scholastically, other schools containing the largest number of immigrants were not dealing adequately with the rapidly multiplying needs that confronted them. This was confirmed by numerous public and private records that revealed unemployed immigrant families caught in the almost impossible bind of poverty amidst the erratic and destructive behavior of an unregulated business cycle. New York's Superintendent of Schools, William Maxwell, called out for public concern and aid to resolve the unique and exceptional educational problems of immigrant children. Society, in general, did not listen and did not respond. According to the Hanus survey and reports of school superintendents for 1904 to 1922, between 32% and 36% of public school pupils were 'over-age' and making 'slow progress' in any given year. Excessive retardation was claimed to be correlated to lower socio-economic life patterns. In his 1922 Annual Report, New York City School Superintendent William Ettinger cited progressive failure by students in high school grades and a great deal of truancy. Indeed, fewer than 10% of the school population graduated from high school in 1915.

"But here we find one of the important major differences between 'then' and 'now.' Many of these 'drop-outs' of pre-Great Depression days, as well as long term truants, were frequently encouraged to leave school by the available employment to be found in manufacturing and industry. Indeed, some historians are of the opinion that this was just what the industrial order required. Jobs not only could be found (with, of course, different standards than that of today), but they were readily available and frequently served as an inducement and reason for permanent truancy. For those remaining lower socio-economic immigrant children in school, scholastic success would oftentimes come only after the establishment of ethnic stability -- built around perhaps ethnic businesses, commercial or labor organizations and the creation of an ethnic middle class. Ethnic cohesiveness and solidarity stimulated internal self-help organizations that in turn served some as catalytic agents necessary for their scaling the walls to the middle class of the outside general society.

"Before the Great Depression manpower was the crucial factor and the factory and the union were frequently more powerful assimilating agents and change factors than was public education. The ethnic immigrants did advance in every

way -- through business and commerce, labor and trade unions, politics and government but not usually through the mobility that was supposed to be provided by the public schools.

"Thirty years ago Marie Syrkin wrote in *Your School, Your Children* that the high schools of the cities were unable to properly educate masses of Americans: that the methods and the system used then (and still extensively used today) was a debasement rather than a fulfillment of democracy and sprang from 'a distrust rather than a faith in the common man.' Yet, in 1941 over 38% of our nation's population had a high school experience as against 75% today. We had difficulty in educating one-third of the masses then and we are having greater difficulty in educating three-fourths of the masses today.

"Perhaps it is too much to ask that an educational system serve as a socio-economic means of upward mobility or as a laboratory for democracy without concomitant changes in employment, housing, health, family relationships and in social class values. Yet, this is precisely what educators claimed they could do and this is what the nation expected them to do and this is what they have not done. Education has just not been able to accomplish what John Dewey called modifying 'the social order.' Instead, education has reflected the social order and has not brought about any significant changes.

"Public education became then the 'rubber stamp' of economic improvement rather than the 'operation boot strap' necessary for advancement. The White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ethos had brought about a self-fulfilling prophecy for those who should have known better. They came to accept the myths of their past as provided by others, rather than the reality of their past as experienced by themselves and their forebearers.

"But urban public education never really provided upward mobility for the majority of poor white ethnic immigrants and sons of immigrants -- the Irish, Italians, Hungarians, Polish and other Slavic groups. Smaller, yet more cohesive and stronger ethnic groups, such as the Chinese, Japanese and East European Jews, initially could, as groups and thus also as individuals, more adequately contend with the Protestant ethos, which dominated and surprisingly still dominates the public schools. It was frequently left to the parochial schools to extend the Irish Catholic population, for example, a sense of self-identity and to help that population develop a positive relationship with its new homeland, involving its own religion and culture. Greeley and Rossi, in their important study, *The Education of Catholic Americans*, observed that Catholic-school Catholics 'are actually more tolerant with regard to civil liberties and are no more anti-Negro, anti-Semitic, or anti-Protestant' than Catholics who went to public schools. The study also revealed signs that the younger and better educated Catholic-school Catholics had greater social consciousness and greater tolerance for different groups than Catholics of the same age and educational level who had attended public school.

"The damage to pluralism in American life has been even greater. Several years ago Margaret Mead wrote *The School In American Culture*. In this book, Miss Mead describes the effect of the public school upon the typical immigrant school child. 'They must be taught,' she writes, 'not the constancies of their parents' immediate past,.....but they must be taught to reject, and usually to despise their parents' values. They must learn those things which, to the extent that they make them Americans, will alienate them forever from their parents, making them ancestorless, children of the future, cut off from the past.' Thus if the schools aided in the assimilation or the Americanization of the immigrants it was at the expense of their previous value structure and their authentic identities."[14]

Further light on how the foreign-born and their children fared in our schools is shed by David K. Cohen, Co-Director of the Harvard Center for Educational Policy Studies, who recently analyzed studies of retardation and retention rates in relation to such factors as nationality, I.Q. and social class, studies made for the most part during the first three decades of the 20th century. His article on "Immigrants and the Schools" points up the importance of ethnic differences.

"In summary, then, although the evidence I have presented is fragmentary and often non-comparable, it suggests that in the first generation, at least, children from many immigrant groups did not have an easy time in school. Pupils from these groups were more likely to make low scores on I.Q. tests, and they seem to have been a good deal less likely to remain in high school. It also appears that children of first-generation immigrants from these groups had as difficult a time in the 1920s or 1930s as their predecessors experienced during the first decade of the century.

"It must be equally clear, however, that being the son or daughter of an immigrant did not in itself result in below-average educational attainment. Children whose parents emigrated from England, Scotland, Wales, Germany, and Scandinavia seem to have generally performed about as well in school as native whites; certainly their average performance never dropped much below that level. The children of Jewish immigrants typically achieved at or above the average for native whites. It was central and southern European non-Jewish immigrants -- and, to a lesser extent, the Irish -- who experienced really serious difficulty in school. On any index of educational attainment (whether it was retardation, achievement scores, I.Q., or retention), children from these nationalities were a good deal worse off than native urban whites.

"Perhaps the most interesting question this raises involves the origin of these ethnic differences: did they arise primarily from group differences in inherited social and economic attributes or were they chiefly the consequence of differences

in culture and motivation? At first glance, the second seems a likely alternative; after all, the main over-achievers -- the Jews -- typically placed a great value on education. But there is more to it than that, for there is evidence which suggests that the rank order of intelligence among immigrant groups would correspond roughly to their rank order on an index of urbanization. This is clearest if one compares the Italians (most of whom emigrated from Southern Italy) and the Poles with immigrants from Germany, or with the Jews. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that there were very great differences among the Jews according to nation of origin. The U.S. Immigration Commission (1911, Vol. I, p. 31) found that 37% of German Jewish children experienced school retardation, as against 41% for the Russian Jews, 52% of the Rumanian Jews, and 67% of the Polish Jews. These proportions closely resemble those for non-Jews of those nationalities. In addition, there is some evidence that among the immigrant groups, those whose children achieved well stood somewhat higher on the occupational scale.

"Another important issue concerns the schools' response to the immigrants. The arrival of large numbers of immigrant pupils coincided with the emergence of I.Q. and achievement testing, vocational guidance, and the movement to diversify instruction and curriculum in city schools. There is more than a little evidence that these practices were employed -- if not conceived -- as a way of providing the limited education schoolmen often thought suitable for children from the lower reaches of the social order. The tension this suggests also extended to the schools' culture: there is no evidence of any effort to employ the immigrants' language and culture as educational vehicles. I have been unable to find any hint that cultural diversity was entertained as a serious possibility; it appears that the WASP culture reigned supreme in urban public schools. In this connection, it is important to note that there appears to have been a substantial movement to create educational alternatives among some immigrant groups. For the Irish and Italians, of course, the Catholic parochial schools served this function, as did part-time religious schools for the Jews. There also were efforts -- among the Bohemians, for example -- to establish part-time 'language schools' as a way of maintaining and transmitting the culture."

Cohen is far less damning than Lachman of the ultimate utility of schooling as a social mobility force. He concludes his review of "Immigrants and the Schools" by saying: "Finally, there is the question of schooling and social mobility. I have shown that there was a good deal of variability in immigrant children's educational attainment: some groups did as well or better than the average for native urban whites, and others much worse. But to show that the children of many immigrant groups had difficulty in school is not to show that education turned out to be a less effective way for them to climb the social and economic ladder. Almost all the results I have presented are

based on evidence about the children of first generation immigrants, and it centers in the first two or three decades of the century. What data I have found on exposure to the urban American culture and society suggests that it coincided with drastically reduced educational differences between immigrants and native whites. Furthermore, the Duncans (1968) have presented evidence that education may have been no less important for the children of immigrants than for native whites in accounting for differences in occupational attainment."[15]

Dr. Lachman in his paper also compares the immigrant experience to the black experience both in the past and today. He says: "Today the racial integration of American society presents an even more serious problem than integrating and assimilating large numbers of immigrants with different languages and customs, values and traditions. This was indicated even as far back as 1915. At the time when the Hanus study had revealed retardation, drop-outs and truancy in the general population, Frances Blascoer had undertaken another study that was limited only to Negro school children. In both reports school retardation was discovered to be progressive with the child performing less adequately at the end than at the start of his formal school career. Yet, even then there was an important difference between the two studies. Acknowledging the prejudice that made the black students' lives difficult -- both in and out of the classroom -- Miss Blascoer stated that the Negro's educational problems demanded different treatment. Society, which oftentimes in the past was guilty of denying the necessary education to immigrant groups, denied to the black man even the pragmatic justification for this denial. For the Negro at the turn of the century, as for the black man today, the category of race not only added a dimension greater than just ethnic difference to the rigors of lower class life, but also frequently placed him outside of the now unaccepted but then glorified melting pot concept of American life.

"Today our cities do not even contain the weak saving grace, if there can be such a thing, of mass poverty and subsistence, cutting widely across race and ethnic boundaries. The pockets of poverty in our nation's cities today overwhelmingly consist of our black and Spanish-speaking fellow citizens. These are the children who today attend what is known as the urban centers' inner city schools.

"All our major school systems must engage in systematic redefinition of our goals and means to these goals. Similarly, departments and schools of education where teachers are educated must reexamine their role. This is truly a national problem and there must be a reordering of national priorities to give education the attention, research and funding that it so desperately needs. But there must also be an encouragement of authentic group identification if the diversity of our American democratic society is to be continued. This involves a basic reinterpretation of the value and importance of public education in enhancing rather than extinguishing a multi-cultural democratic experience.

The phenomenon of cultural pluralism will have to be more readily understood and incorporated within the curriculum. And this is not just a problem of dealing adequately with black Americans and Spanish Americans. The Rev. Paul Asciolla, an Italian-American editor and ethnic 'activist' in Chicago has said:

> Ethnics are trying to find out who they are. The history books they studied in school didn't tell them. They are rootless people. They gave the 'melting pot' a chance. They tried to become 'Americanized'...but they could never find out what becoming an American meant in terms of full acceptance... Cultural pluralism is the most logical solution we can hope for. But we have to redefine our values and ask: What does it mean to be an American?"[16]

The Ethnic Studies Component

In a report prepared for the National Project on Ethnic America, Dr. Melvin Scult of Vasser College reviews recent happenings in the field of ethnic studies.[17] The following are a few extended excerpts from that report: "The United States government has recently given recognition to the right of some of our sub-cultures to perpetuate themselves by establishing a network of bilingual education centers around the country. The act passed by Congress in 1967 (Title VII Amendment to 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act) led to the establishment of 76 programs involving 27,000 pupils in some form of bilingual-bicultural education. Most of the programs were in Spanish but there were also some in French, Chinese, Japanese and Indian dialects."

Another sign of new governmental interest is highlighted by the moves of Congressman Roman Pucinski of Chicago and Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania who have both recently introduced "Ethnic Heritage Studies Center Acts" into the House and the Senate. The enthusiastic response which greeted the introduction of these bills is evidence of the rising public tide of interest in ethnic studies.

In his paper, Dr. Scult completed a cursory review of materials, programs and organizational patterns related to ethnic studies. He finds the following: "With all that has been written about discovery-learning, the open classroom, etc., it is well known that the majority of children in elementary schools still use one textbook per subject and that the whole textbook market insofar as Social Studies is concerned is dominated by a few companies, each of which has a series that goes through the junior high grades. All the major publishers have followed the

same pattern of starting with the local community and going progressively to the study of larger and larger units. A number of studies have been made which survey the content of these texts insofar as minorities are concerned. The most interesting is an unpublished thesis, *The Treatment of Minority Groups in Primary Social Studies Text Books*, by Loretta Golden who received her doctorate from Stanford University in 1964.

"In chapter after chapter of the study, we find that the special character and quality of minority group life is neglected. Regarding Mexican-Americans for example, the author finds that 'information is omitted for all Mexicans (mentioned), on the specific food they eat, their dances, music, folk tales, games, celebration of holidays and religion' (Golden, p. 86). The same is the case for immigrants when they are mentioned in the text books, '...wear American clothes, and never speak or sing in their native language' (Golden, p. 119).

"In all the books surveyed, the Jewish people were not mentioned once. In one text there was a picture of a synagogue but other than this the Jews are completely left out of the frequently used texts and the others as well (Golden, p. 143).

"At the end of her study Golden lists some rather disturbing characteristics which these texts exhibit:

> Minority group persons seldom have social relations as equals with dominant group persons.
>
> Most minority group adults who are pictured or described as using recreational facilities with dominant group persons are in a service or entertainment capacity.
>
> Most minority adults are in occupations associated with their culture. (They work in an Indian shop, Chinese shop, etc.)
>
> Most Italian-Americans hold positions in which they work with food or food products.
>
> Minority group persons are seldom described as speaking a foreign language (Golden, pp. 198-200).

"A spot check of the latest editions of many of these works has turned up more minority characters, especially blacks, but the policy is still what we have described as the 'Americanization Policy' rather than the 'inclusion of differences.'

"The study of minority groups is not only the study of their cultural traditions but also of their struggles to maintain themselves in the face of pressure from the dominant culture and from other minority groups.

"When we look to the material used in the elementary grades, we find an appalling lack of concern with the problems of the lower classes. The philosophical model of text book writers seems to be that if we describe life the way it ought to be or if we neglect the problems that beset us we will help build healthier children who have a more positive attitude toward their environment. I suggest that while it is important to give children a sense of confidence and not to surround them with unrealistic fears or to tell them about situations they cannot handle either emotionally or intellectually, there is much more that we can do toward giving a more realistic picture of life to children in the elementary grades.

"In my own examination of relevant material, I find a hesitation to present real and important differences between groups. In a second grade text, Hanukah and Christmas are presented in exactly the same language. The piece on Hanukah does not mention the Jews: 'Hanukah is a special time. Hanukah is a happy time. It is a time to be thankful. Many people have Hanukah. People all over the world have Hanukah.' (*Your School and Neighborhood*, Ginn & Co., 1966, p. 90.) In the same book, when dealing with Puerto Rico, a student asks, 'what are people in Puerto Rico like?' 'They are like you and John,' said Miss Little, 'they are like the people here.' (Ibid, p. 51.) How can we expect our children to have any real respect for people who are different from themselves, when they are presented with material such as that which we have been describing?

"There are many programs that deal with prejudice but none have been as carefully worked out or as extensively tested as the Intergroup Relations Curriculum created by the Lincoln Filene Center for Citizenship and Public Affairs at Tufts University under the direction of John S. Gibson. Although the program has many goals, one of its primary aims is to aid students 'to value a person on the basis of that person's individual qualities as well as the positive attributes of the groups to which he belongs or with which he is identified.' (John S. Gibson, *The Intergroup Relations Curriculum*, Lincoln Filene Center, Medford, Mass., 1969, p. 2.)

"One of the key concepts used in working toward this goal is the idea of the governing process. Starting with the family and the town, students are helped to understand the way the governing process can be used to resolve conflicts and to foster the general welfare of the group involved. In the program's early stages, the stereotyping of groups is attacked directly with many imaginative and carefully thought out techniques. In one lesson, for example, students are presented with pictures of children who are visibly different and they are told a story about the pictures which they have to complete at key points. This kind of technique can give a teacher reliable information on the students' stereotypes.

"The Lincoln Filene Center has worked on refining this curriculum for many years. They have tested it extensively in the

communities around Boston and have worked out an in-service program for teachers that can be conducted with or without direct aid from the Center's staff. They have, for example, succeeded in initiating their program in many communities in the Providence, Rhode Island area after an extensive in-service course given to the teachers involved.

"In 1969 the American Jewish Committee in Boston and the Massachusetts Department of Public Instruction jointly sponsored a state-wide survey of programs in the field of ethnic studies. The results indicate some of the more creative ways in which ethnic studies can be integrated into the curriculum. For example, a number of elementary schools in Newton, Massachusetts, begin at the second grade level with a study of shelter in Borneo, the Sahara, Southern France and among the Navajo as a reflection of different environments and different cultures. Fourth grade students devote a significant portion of the year to the study of Puerto Rican Harlem and French Louisiana as instances of ethnic communities. An eighth grade class at the Ipswich Junior High School has a year-long social studies course entitled *What is happening to me now?* The goal of the course is to help the students crystalize their own feelings and thoughts about themselves and a wide variety of subjects. During the second quarter, they devote themselves to the local patterns of prejudice in their own community -- the unit is called *Why do you hate me?*

"There are many instances listed in this Massachusetts report which indicate courses in Black History, in History of Immigration or in the study of different minority groups (what we have termed ethnic group history). One of the more unusual approaches is illustrated by a course at the Meadowbrook Junior High School in Newton entitled *The Uprooted*. Included among the readings are: *The Fifth Chinese Daughter, A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, Children of Sanchez, My Name is Aram, My Antonia*, and others.

"In many instances, the most creative programs seem to emanate from the idea that ethnic and minority groups share certain experiences that can be illustrated by examples from almost any group.

"The structure in which children learn is as important a factor to the outcome of their studies as is the content of their courses. Our recommendations as to the type of programs that the Institute might foster will center on structure."

Dr. Scult has some preferred examples of programs he thinks are working. He recommends a differential strategy depending on the ethnic make-up of a given school or school system. "When the school contains primarily one ethnic group, it is possible to pair schools which have different ethnic populations and to hold social studies classes together. The content of the courses would be minority problems and the ethnic traditions of the children involved. There are a number of examples of this type of program which are very instructive. In 1969-70, a public elementary school in Philadelphia, the Vare School, and a neighboring Catholic school, the

Sacred Heart School, arranged to have their fifth grade social studies classes meet together part of the time. At a year-end evaluative meeting, the principal of the Vare School explained that '...there had been a great deal of tension between the two schools. School safeties clashed; students shouted profanities at each other, etc., etc.' All of this changed as a result of the pairing program, according to the principal.

"The goals of the program were briefly outlined at the evaluative meeting:

1. An intelligent appreciation of cultural differences and a realization of the influences of the traditions which formed this country.

2. The realization that different does not mean inferior.

3. An appreciation of the contributions of the various cultures and people that make up the United States of America.

4. An intelligent attitude on the part of both children and parents in dealing with all cases of difference.

"A Puerto Rican educator indicated the type of effect that a pairing program can have: 'At the beginning, all the girls from Hallahan sat on one side and all the girls from William Penn sat on the other side. It was very segregated. We never really got along very well until we had a Day of Dialogue, and we found out that we could become close friends and everything.'

"The pairing idea is especially appropriate where de facto segregation has led to schools with distinct racial or ethnic characters. There are other kinds of situations where a school is multi-ethnic in character and is in the process of changing.

"Another concept is 'the multi-ethnic school.' Under such a program (this is intended only for elementary schools), all students would go to morning classes in reading and mathematics on a regular basis. In the afternoon, however, the school would split up into ethnic groups and each group would study its own literature traditions, language and history. Such a program takes into account the divisions already existing in the school and seeks to foster understanding among the groups while, at the same time, giving recognition to their seperate existence. Such a system is truly pluralistic and therefore, most genuinely American.

"Such a school is already in operation in San Francisco and is called 'The Multi-Culture Institute.' Frances Sussna, the

Director, indicated that there are some 130 children from age three to age eight involved in the program. In the morning, the classes are integrated; in the afternoon, the children are placed in one of four groups: Afro-American, Chinese-American, Latin-American and Jewish. There is also a fifth group made up of children from backgrounds not falling under the other four categories. Miss Sussna explained that there were combined periods in which each group teaches the others about its own group. She also stated that the staff attempts 'to show the relevance of the message of each group to all groups.' Children learn that ethnic groups need not be measured in terms of 'better or worse, but that every ethnic group is unique, special and important just as every individual is unique, special and important.'

"One might think that such a school would increase the sense of divisiveness among the groups and make the children more intensely ethnocentric. The goals that permeate the school have, however, worked in precisely the other direction."

A few of these goals are given below.

1. The concepts of collective guilt and collective punishment have wrought much harm throughout history and still pose dangers.

2. Every individual should be judged on his or her individual merits rather than be pre-judged as a member of natural groups.

3. It is important to be able to judge which are situations in which a person's ethnic background is legitimately a fact to be considered, e.g., hiring waiters for restaurants with French or Japanese decor.

4. Within the history of every group we can find some examples which conform to our present standards of ethics and some which do not.

5. There are many ways to contribute to society, although different communities at different times have rewarded certain roles over others.

6. It is possible to be a valuable member of the general society while being a knowledgeable and active member of one's own group.

7. A group's freedom to act for its own benefit, like an individual's freedom, ends at the point where somebody else's begins.

In discussing the high school level, Dr. Scult finds: "Although the structure and curriculum of the high school years differ in many fundamental ways from the elementary grades, they share certain features in the matter of ethnic studies. Thus, programs in black literature, black history and the contemporary experience of blacks in America have been proliferating at a rapid rate all over the country. Through their offices of education, states and cities have supplied material that purports to deal with all significant minority groups but actually deals only (or mostly) with blacks. Textual material, while more realistic than at the elementary level, still is lacking in the fundamental issues which divide us and which make up the major news stories every day.

"There are virtually no materials that deal systematically and in depth with minority problems. Assimilation, acculturation, the political functioning of minorities, discrimination, prejudice, the origin and development of ethnic cultural traditions, the relationship between language and minority group strength and the problem of marginality are all areas which could be profitably and systematically explored at the high school level.

"A series of booklets collectively entitled *Justice in Urban America* was recently published by Houghton Mifflin & Co. Each booklet, consisting of approximately 100 pages, deals with a different aspect of justice and law in the cities. Their titles are: 'Law and the City,' 'Youth and the Law,' 'Landlord and Tenant,' 'Law and the Consumer,' 'Poverty and Welfare,' and 'Crimes and Justice.' Used together they constitute a one-year course on those problems that press so hard on the lives of the lower (ethnic) classes in the cities. The tone is much more even-handed than any civic texts now in circulation. The series is jointly sponsored by the Chicago Bar Association and the Board of Education of the City of Chicago.

"A much more well-known series was produced under the aegis of the Social Studies Department at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Professor Donald Oliver, the Director of this project, attempted to introduce the idea of value conflict into the study of American history. In *Teaching Public Issues in the High School*, he explains the theory behind his approach to the social studies. He rightly focuses on the importance of teaching students to make intelligent decisions about the important issues of the day. Each booklet in the series focuses on a value conflict, e.g., equality versus individual freedom, which is exemplified by a particular event or series of events in American life. Documents and secondary sources point up the key aspects of the controversy and excellent questions help the student to understand the different factors necessary to take a stand on the issue. One booklet is germane to our subject and it is entitled 'The Immigrants' Experience - Cultural Variety and the Melting Pot.'

"To the administrator in the field, the key problem at this

point seems to be how to introduce ethnic studies into the curriculum. Our most interesting finding in this regard is that the same school system may work in many directions at once. In Philadelphia, for example, there were 24 schools offering Black History courses in 1968; approximately 1350 students were involved. Philadelphia is also in the process of setting up courses in Puerto Rican studies and in Jewish studies. At the same time the Department of Social Studies of the Central Administration is setting up a program in what we call ethnic studies for grades 5 - 12. In 1970-71, there will be approximately 1000 students involved in this new program. Because of this example and others like it, we do not feel it makes sense to recommend that school systems deal with separate ethnic groups on the one hand or with the common problems of all groups on the other. Both can be done at the same time and the particular ethnic makeup of the school system and the pressures on the local administration will be the deciding factors.

"Some school systems have chosen the medium of the voluntary after-school club to focus on the problems of minorities rather than the formal classroom. Los Angeles has been the most successful in this type of approach. They have a well-organized large network of clubs called Human Relations Workshops. The school department has published materials to aid teachers who set up the workshops and has appointed a professional Ethnic Recognition Specialist to aid in securing guest speakers, films, etc., for the local groups. A Human Relations Guide issued by the school department suggests that the workshops might consider for discussion such topics as, 'The Contribution of Minority Groups to American Society,' 'Intercultural, Interfaith and Interracial Dating,' and 'Minority Group Responsibilities.' In 1968, sixty schools in Los Angeles had these workshops. Chicago and Detroit also have gone in heavily for this type of program.

"A television series by KQED in San Francisco was an outstanding example of what educational T.V. can do in the area of ethnic studies. The program was called *That's A Good Question* and, in addition to general considerations of prejudice, it devoted separate sessions to each of many ethnic groups. The station published a pamphlet to serve as a guide for pre-program preparation and for post-viewing activities."

On the university level, Dr. Scult finds: "At this point in time, it is impossible to consider ethnic studies in a university setting without first discussing the problems of Black Studies. In the past few years, more and more colleges that previously only had a token number of black students have been trying to increase their black population. With the new influx that has resulted, has come a host of problems not confronted by institutions of higher learning before. The desire of blacks for separate housing, separate cultural centers, autonomous departments of Black Studies and black advisors has been a constant pressure on the universities. The colleges seem to be caught in the middle with militant young blacks demanding separatism on the one hand, and

older, more moderate black leaders opposing separatism as racist and destructive no matter what group demands it."

Dr. Scult agrees with those who advocate the study of the black experience as a serious enterprise. He says, "More students every day are coming to realize the considerable extent to which our history, political science and sociology have, until recently, neglected the blacks in America. All courses in this area ought to meet the same standards of rigor and objectivity that the university demands in every other area. If this were the case, the legitimate demands of blacks to study the black experience and to employ the intellectual resources of the university in seeking solutions to the problems of the black community would be satisfied.

"In the wake of this spread of Black Studies, have come demands by other ethnic groups to be included in the curriculum. The question thus arises: if blacks have a legitimate claim on the universities, why not Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, etc.?

"Colleges and universities must also be concerned with the objective scholarly value of any proposed study that might be introduced into the curriculum. Students in quest of their own identity must be listened to, but their demands ought to be balanced by a more objective consideration of the virtues of the field in question as an object of scientific study.

"Before we leave the matter of ethnic studies within the regular curriculum, it should be noted that the study of ethnic groups has become especially widespread in our junior colleges. These institutions tend to serve the large masses of students from the lower urban classes, most of whom are ethnic Americans. Because junior colleges are not geared toward preparing students for graduate school, they can more easily concentrate on the immediate perceived needs of the students.

"Another area where we are likely to see an expansion in ethnic studies is in Schools of Education. In the past few years, the preparation of teachers has improved considerably and many Schools of Education have come to realize that they must acquaint prospective teachers with the urban scene if most of them are to be able to cope with their first assignments.

"In addition to course offerings within the regular curriculum, institutes devoted to scholarly research about one or more ethnic group have also appeared in recent years. Among the older centers is the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii which is devoted to research in the area of cross-cultural learning. Students from over thirty-three countries have come to the center to study on the graduate level. At the Claremont Colleges in California there is an Institute in Mexican-American studies, one in black studies and one in urban studies. The director of the Mexican-American center admitted that 'the centers will overlap, particularly when the call for multi-racial cooperation could

serve the purposes of each center as they tackle those urban problems which have multi-racial aspects or implications.' (*Intercultural Education*, January 1970, p. 15.) U.C.L.A. is in the process of establishing a program that takes this lack of coordination into account. It is to be called the Institute for American Cultures and will include centers for the study of Afro-American culture, Mexican-American, Oriental-American and Indian history and culture (Kroepsch, p. 3).

"There are also a number of centers devoted to the study of immigration which clearly are relevant to our interest. Dr. Rudolph Vecoli, who has published much in this field, is Director of the Center for Immigration Studies at the University of Minnesota. There is also a Center for Migration Studies at Brooklyn College under the direction of Professor Clarence Senior."

Dr. Scult offers some organizational advice for the higher education level: "The programs we have been discussing will serve to give many ethnic Americans a greater sense of their own identity and will increase the awareness of their cultural heritage. At the same time, however, such programs may lead minority group students to a greater sense of isolation from other minority groups and from the society at large. The question is whether it is possible to foster a greater sense of one's own group identity and at the same time to encourage groups to study common problems and seek common political, economic and social goals. In short, can we have real cultural pluralism and, at the same time, work for the general welfare of all disadvantaged minority groups. This goal is not only possible but can easily be given expression on the university level in an overall program in ethnic studies that includes all the types of programs mentioned above and more.

"The idea is that if there are a number of departments, each of which is devoted to a particular ethnic group, or if there are a number of institutes, they can be brought together under the general rubric of ethnic studies. This administrative cohesion would encourage both students and teachers to explore common problems that all minorities have. The matter of common minority problems are usually dealt with in one course in the sociology department. It is logical that with the establishment of the study of even one ethnic group, this offering in minority studies would be expanded so that a student could major in ethnic studies with an emphasis on one group or another.

"There are many ways in which courses in minority studies might be expanded. Each college will want to work out its own direction. One example that may be instructive is a course taught at Case Western Reserve by the noted sociologist R. A. Schermerhorn. It is called 'Minority Role Behavior' and deals primarily with the problem of marginality. The two groups which are the main focus of the study are Jews and Negroes.

"Another neglected field is that of white ethnic America.

The work of Andrew Greeley, Earl Raab, Gus Tyler, Irving M. Levine and others in the field of white ethnic America clearly indicates our ignorance about the very significant role that ethnic consciousness plays among ethnic Americans whose roots are in Europe. Recent national and regional conferences on white ethnic America and the response of white ethnics to Congressman Pucinski's and Senator Schweiker's Ethnic Heritage Studies Program Bill indicates a widespread interest in this largely unexplored field. Thus, the study of white ethnic America ought to be included in any general ethnic studies program.

"This approach of bringing all ethnic groups under one umbrella would serve to depolarize and reduce tension among minorities, at least those on our college campuses. It is also possible that a college ethnic studies program can encourage students to seek modes of social change outside the academic framework which reflects the philosophy of the ethnic studies approach. Students might be encouraged to look for solutions to social and economic problems that are good for all minorities, not just for one particular group. It is important that each ethnic group on campus understand that coming together in one program does not mean that any group will lose anything it has gained in terms of recognition within the college. The program suggested here is similar to many on college campuses that are of an inter-disciplinary nature which leaves its separate components intact. The value of the ethnic studies more-inclusive approach is that through conferences, lectures and other cooperative programs, it encourages those interested in one ethnic group or another to focus on common problems that all minorities have."

Dr. Scult sees ethnic studies in a far more important context than those who support it for only curricular or political reasons. He concludes by stressing that: "Some critics of the contemporary scene maintain that Americans have too much faith in education as an agent of social change. Though this faith may be misplaced, this author must confess that he feels it very strongly. For there are many ways in which our curriculum -- ethnic studies -- seems to be revolutionary in terms of its ultimate goal.

"The underlying assumption of ethnic studies is that America can be a genuinely pluralistic society in terms of language and culture. Our aim is not only to emphasize how any ethnic subculture has contributed to the American way of life but also to have people understand that there are and ought to be many ways of American life and that our school systems ought to be geared towards nurturing and fostering these subcultures wherever they exist.

"Ethnic studies is revolutionary because it seeks to impose on the school the obligation of helping to guard the rights of minorities. The classroom, therefore, is not only the place where the best in our society is transmitted but where the problems of minority groups are studied. The sufferings of blacks, of Mexican-

Americans, of Indians and of lower class white ethnics ought to be a major component in the social studies curriculum. Minority studies may also lead the minority groups themselves to see that they have much in common to work for; a sense of shared problems would certainly help to depolarize black and white ethnic Americans and thereby reduce some of the tensions that beset us. Such a critical focus in our schools would turn out more children who were really patriotic. Patriotism in a democracy where no one group has a monopoly on truth or power, means that everyone is obligated to be critical and to search for better ways of solving social problems within the context of the legal barriers set up for the general welfare."

The Saliency of Ethnicity

While the saliency of ethnicity is hardly in dispute when one is alluding to the problems and identity of blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and American Indians, there is sharp dispute on the question of the ethnic component and identity needs of other American groups.

Class as a determinant still holds sway in most conventional and elevated thought and perhaps this analysis hugs much truth. But the relative neglect of the historical and contemporary fact of the very close correlation in American life of both class and ethnicity has led to a lack of preciseness and a lack of appreciation of the relative importance of differential ethnicity.

It still gnaws at the gut of too many intellectuals and practitioners to accept a statement such as made by Marvin K. Opler in discussing the mental health of different ethnic groups.

Dr. Opler states that:

> The problem may not be whether Italians or Irish become entangled in personal conflicts, or repress, but rather what and, equally important, how they repress, how they convert energies or direct them, and what cognitive attitudes and outlooks motivate them. These regulatory and control functions, no matter how much they become internalized in individual personality, have, as outer limits the cultural backgrounds, themselves uniquely organized into "styles and regulative principles."[18]

And what are the consequences to the facile white-black model of racial confrontation when a fine scholar such as Harold J. Abramson states in his recent paper, *Ethnic Pluralism in the Central City*, that, "Let us consider a few important ideas, especially those which are particularly germane to life in the central city. Home ownership, for example, is often an important characteristic in describing an urban neighborhood, but we

usually lack information on which groups are more likely to own their home, and which are more likely to rent them. We would probably expect that relatively few in the central cities of Connecticut do actually own their homes, or live in houses where they are paying on a mortgage instead of some fixed rental. This is true; only one-third of all central city residents own their homes. But the figures for the different ethnic groups show real diversity. As many as half of all Jews, and Eastern European, Italian and Polish Catholics own their homes, but all other groups are considerably more likely to rent theirs. And this diversity remains even when we look at blue collar and white collar families. White collar job-holders are somewhat more likely to own than to rent, for all in the survey taken as a whole, but this is not always true for each ethnic group taken separately. German Catholics and Jews, for example, are more likely to own a home if they are blue collar, and there is no difference at all between white collar and blue collar Irish, or between Italians of different occupations. Regardless of their occupational status, the Irish are more likely to rent, and the Italians are more likely to own. Interests in home ownership, and the alternative prospects of owning or renting, are variable by ethnicity as well as class.

"The idea of home ownership in the central city is important also for the sense of the neighborhood. Despite all the research into the large metropolitan or middle-size American city, under the traditional name of urban sociology, we know little about comparative ethnic behavior in the central city. We lack information, for example, on the ethnic neighborhood. To be sure, there are studies and reports which look at particular neighborhoods individually. But until we emphasize comparative life styles, we cannot begin to talk about ethnic pluralism.

"In this connection, it is valuable to have an idea of the ethnic relationships in urban neighborhoods. A question included in this recent survey which comes close to this idea refers to the number of close friends in the neighborhood who are relatives or in-laws of the family being interviewed. This question then taps not only the location, i.e., the immediate neighborhood, but also the nature of friendship choice and kinship. For all people in the survey, only 27% replied that most of their close friends are neighbors. But the difference by social class is impressive. Blue collar workers are more than twice as likely to have these stronger ties of kinship than are white collar workers. And this is true for most of the specific groups mentioned as well.

"Ethnic diversity on this question is also impressive. Of all the groups interviewed in Connecticut's central cities, the Italians, the Spanish-speaking and the Poles stand out as reflecting this kind of ethnic kinship pattern and neighborhood. The white collar Protestants and German Catholics stand out too, at the other end, as exceptions to this pattern.

"The implications of this are interesting. If one-third to one-half of a particular group in the central city claims that most of its friendship choices in the neighborhood are among relatives and kinfolk, then the idea of the urban neighborhood assumes a strength and a character which, perhaps, many have tended to ignore. The neighborhood can be an extended family, or so it can be defined if the three ideas of local vicinity, friendship choice and family relations are more than randomly united. If this pattern varies and is more important for some ethnic groups than for others, as it indeed is, it is crucial for urban planning and urban development. The problems of urban renewal seem all the more momentous because they so frequently tend to ignore this very kind of consideration."[19]

Education in Whitetown

In his book *Whitetown U.S.A.*, Peter Binzen penetrates the educational system of the white ethnic neighborhood and discovers the Kensington district of Philadelphia. He finds that Kensington is "a community in crises. In many ways it looks, thinks and acts like so many of the Negro ghettos festering in American cities. Its educational, political, social and economic problems are almost as great as those found in the black slums. It, too, has failed to solve these problems, and failure has made it sullen, surly and suspicious.

"Kensington is 99.7% white. About 100,000 Americans live there, the first, second and third-generation descendents of Irish, Polish, Ukrainian, Italian, Hungarian, German, and even a few Scottish and English immigrants. (Most Whitetowners are ethnics, but a few are WASPs, and some Whitetowns -- such as Cleveland's Near West Side, which is populated by refugees from Appalachia -- are almost solidly Anglo-Saxon.)

"Kensington's air is polluted, its streets and sidewalks are filthy, its juvenile crime rate is rising, its industry is languishing. No more than a handful of new houses have been built there in the last third of a century. Its schools are among the oldest in the city, industry is moving out." And yet -- the most telling point of all -- "nothing much is being done to get the old mill district back on its feet."

Proud but neglected, powerless and nearly voiceless, inhabitants of the Kensingtons of the country simmer in a state of "white rage," as Mr. Binzen terms it. Despite frequently chauvinistic manifestations of patriotism, Whitetowners are profoundly alienated from the mainstream of American life. Threatened, as they see it, at home and at work by the encroachments of blacks supported by white do-gooders and expedient politicians, they are both too proud and too frightened (of being forced to integrate) to ask for help. Besides, "nobody knows how to work (for social change) in the white community," comments a

Kensington-born college student who would like to. Most Whitetowners are suspicious of social workers and college kids (especially bearded ones), of politicians, educators, preachers, intellectuals and the press. Insulated and parochial -- many Kensingtonians can barely make their way around downtown Philadelphia, a ten-minute subway ride away -- yet they fail to develop any strong local or community organizations of their own, largely, Mr. Binzen believes, because they think that organization means change and change means integration.

"As far as can be told from the scant information available, the children of Whitetown do almost as badly on measurements of academic aptitude and achievement as do the children of the black slums, sometimes slightly worse. In Philadelphia, some inner-city districts that are 90% or more black (North Philadelphia, for example) produce slightly higher test scores than does Kensington's district. Yet Kensington is excluded from such federal programs as Model Cities, and many of its schools fail to quality for aid under the poverty provision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

"The story is the same from Whitetown after Whitetown. An assistant dean of Harvard's Graduate School of Education says, 'The poor whites in Boston are less well served than the poor blacks.' In Cleveland, principals and teachers report that Appalachian white youngsters are falling behind black pupils in attendance, effort and achievement. Because their parents' fierce pride restrains them from accepting welfare, the children's schools often fail to qualify for aid. In a largely Polish Detroit neighborhood which ranks barely above the poverty level, the school doesn't get a dime of Title I money under ESEA. Its principal says of the people: 'They don't expect help and they don't get any.'

"The schools of Blacktown and Whitetown share a lot besides low test scores and unspeakably gloomy, overcrowded, smelly, too-cold or too-hot buildings." Teachers' attitudes, for one thing. In Kensington, Mr. Binzen found "white educators..... writing off white children" the way so many teachers write off black children: expecting little and, because of this, having their expectations richly (and inevitably) rewarded. Furthermore, he found extreme educational conservatism at a time when liberal reforms were being pushed by the city superintendent and school board. "In Blacktown and Whitetown classrooms alike, I found tough, demanding, old-line battle-axes, sticklers for discipline, foes of all behavior that differed from the conventional."[20]

Ethnic Succession

The discussion of ethnicity and American education would be diminished indeed if the "ethnic succession factor" in the management and administration of schools were avoided.

The recent turbulent and tension-filled strikes in New York City and Newark seemingly pitted blacks against Jews and blacks against Italians.

In a recent paper written by myself and my colleague Judith M. Herman, we discussed the ethnic succession in these terms: "Intimately related to the group self-interest attached to certain occupations is an overlapping ethnic interest in relative power. When many New York school teachers are Jews, the Jewish community sees an attack on established teachers' power as an attack on the power of the Jewish community as a whole. Similarly, when the white political domination of Newark was challenged by blacks, the issue became an Italian issue because of the high overlap between 'established politicians' and 'Italians.' Even though 'Jewishness' or 'Italian-ness' were not specifically attacked except by a few, large segments of both communities felt threatened nonetheless, and not without 'legitimate' reason. Where were Jewish teachers or Italian municipal workers to go, and what would be the resulting impact on the ethnic group's status, power and influence? More important, many informed public officials and other 'opinion molders' do no even define the conflicts which arise in terms of group status and power. The result in many cases has been escalating emotions, with the established group attacked as being only 'anti' the emerging group and not 'pro' their own community's well being.

"There is a scarcity of knowledge or theories dealing with this issue of ethnic succession -- the time when a rising group seeks to capture a field of influence from another group.

"We need to know much more about how the ethnic succession process has occurred in the past:

> What were the instances of succession?
>
> Were the rising groups fought by the established ones, was power ever voluntarily ceded, or was nothing actually given up if the established groups felt it was still a source of power?
>
> What happened to the groups who were succeeded -- did they carry their power with them into new areas, did they themselves attack still other established groups, did they actually decline in power?
>
> Has the status hierarchy of groups been maintained even though each group's actual achievements increased?
>
> Is there a line of movement which groups have historically followed?

"More important, how were the conflicts which grew out of

succession resolved in other historical periods? Were there new institutional responses which prevented polarization from hardening into divisive combat? Can anything be learned which would make it easier for established groups to give up power in one area while not totally losing their influence? Can we find the 'cushions' needed and deserved by individuals who are remnants of their group's power?

"For example, in New York's school system, how can we meet the legitimate needs of both blacks and Jews -- blacks to advance and Jews to not decline? Are there new channels which should be created so that a teacher with twenty years of experience can make that experience useful, even if it is no longer totally relevant in a classroom with a new pupil population? Failing that, can we develop programs to apply to individuals who are 'socially displaced' as we have begun to do for those who are technologically displaced? If such benefits were available, would the ethnic group perceive an attack on its occupational areas to be as threatening as they do when it seems that the only alternative is to defend themselves or to be cast aside altogether?"[21]

Conclusion

Perhaps the single most important goal a complicated, dynamic and diverse society like ours must learn to achieve and educate its young to strive for is the fostering of a "new pluralism."

The structure of American education, its content, the recognition it gives to difference among children and personnel and its historical perspective on the reality of American ethnicity and group life will perhaps do in the future what it has failed miserably to do in the past. That is to help mold children into "pluralistic personalities" with both an appreciation of their own self-worth and heritage and a curiosity, excitement and affection for their neighbors' similarities and differences.

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The Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity believes that if America is to survive as a healthy, pluralistic nation we must respond to the needs of individuals who identify as members of groups and give attention to the broad spectrum of group agendas. At the same time, every precaution must be taken to assure that competing group demands do not deteriorate into polarization, negativism or destructive group chauvinism.

An outgrowth of the National Project on Ethnic America, the Institute's aim is to bring the social sciences and the humanities into closer contact with the values and life styles of America's diverse groupings. We concentrate on developing effective links between scholars, practitioners, government officials and constituencies; formulating new policies and programs related to group status, group identity and group diversity; and publishing and disseminating materials designed to foster better understanding.

It is our belief that the goals of promoting the common good and developing cooperation and coalition are best achieved by recognizing diversity rather than ignoring it.